

THE MARVEL OF TREES

FOR
SSA CHORUS, PIANO AND FLUTE

ANDREW STEFFEN
ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850-1919)

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

Growing up in Wisconsin, I spent a great amount of time at the family cabin. Located in northern Wisconsin, the landscape is vast and aged. The trees line the roads and almost every part around the cabin. Their size is immense, marvelous, and majestic - having been there for hundreds of years. When I began this piece, I was unaware of the poet's connection to Wisconsin, but after I found out, I felt more connected to the music knowing we shared an appreciation for Wisconsin's beautiful landscape.

The melody is playful and whimsical, taking note from the text and imitating the winding nature of branches. The piano is representative of the roots - dense and providing foundation, while the flute imitates the leaves atop the trees, blowing in the wind.

- Andrew Steffen

Perusal Only

The Marvel of Trees

Ella Wheeler Wilcox
(1859-1919)

SSA chorus, piano and flute

Andrew Steffen

Enthusiastically (♩ = 132)

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first system shows the Flute and Piano parts, both marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Flute part consists of a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and slurs. The Piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands. The second system introduces the vocal parts, with a Flute part (Fl.) and three vocal staves (S 1, S 2, and A) all marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and the instruction "with joy and excitement". The lyrics for the vocal parts are: "God, what a joy — it is to plant a tree, — and from the sal-low earth to watch it rise, —". The third system continues the vocal and piano parts. The fourth system shows the piano accompaniment continuing. The fifth system concludes the piece with a final cadence in the piano part.

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

9

lift - ing its em' - rald - bran - ches to the sky in si - lent a - do - ra - tion; —

lift - ing its em' - rald - bran - ches to the sky in si - lent a - do - ra - tion; —

lift - ing its em' - rald - bran - ches to the sky in si - lent a - do - ra - tion; —

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

13

and to see its strength and glor - ry wax - ing

and to see its strength and glor - ry wax - ing

and to see its strength and glor - ry wax - ing

and to see its strength and glor - ry wax - ing

f *molto espr.*

f *molto espr.*

f *molto espr.*

f

18

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

with each spring. Yes, 'tis a good - ly, and a glad - some

22

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

thing to plant a tree. God, what a joy! What a joy!

thing to plant a tree. God, what a joy! God, what a joy!

thing to plant a tree. God, what a joy! God, what a joy!

27

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

mf

Na - ture has — ma - ny mar - vels; but a

mf

Na - ture has — ma - ny mar - vels; but a

mf

Na - ture has — ma - ny mar - vels; but a

31

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

p *cresc.*

mf *cresc.*

mp *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

p

tree seems more — than mar - vel - lous. so ten - der, so be - nign. Not

tree seems more — than mar - vel - lous. so gen - er - ous, so ten - der, so be - nign. Not

tree seems more — than mar - vel - lous. It is di - vine, so gen - er - ous, so ten - der, so be - nign. Not

35

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

gar - ru - lous like the ri - vers; and yet free in plea - sant con - verse with the

gar - ru - lous like the ri - vers; and yet free in plea - sant con - verse with the

gar - ru - lous like the ri - vers; and yet free in plea - sant con - verse with the

39

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

winds and the birds; Oh! priv' - lege be - yond ex - plain - ing

winds and the birds; Oh! priv' - lege be - yond ex - plain - ing

winds and the birds; Oh! priv' - lege be - yond ex - plain - ing

43

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

f

words, to plant a tree. God, what a joy! — What a — joy! —

words, to plant a tree. God, what — a joy! — God, what a — joy! —

words, to plant a tree. God, what — a joy! — God, what a — joy! —

48

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

sempre f

subito mp

Rocks are ma-jes - tic; but un - like a tree, they stand a - loof, and — si -

Rocks are ma-jes - tic; but un - like a tree, they stand a - loof, and — si -

Rocks are ma-jes - tic; but un - like a tree, they stand a - loof, and — si -

52

Fl. *mp*

S 1
- lent. — on the shore

S 2
- lent. — on the shore

A
- lent. — In the roar of the ocean billows breaking on the shore

Pno.

56

Fl.

S 1
— There sounds the voice of tur - moil.

S 2
— There sounds the voice of tur - moil. But a tree speaks ev - er of com- *mf*

A
— There sounds the voice of tur - moil.

Pno. *mf*

61

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

and rest. Yea, of all _____ right - eous acts, this, this is the best, _____

pan - ion - ship and rest. Yea, of all _____ right - eous acts, this, this is the best, _____

and rest. Yea, of all _____ right - eous acts, this, this is the best, _____

66

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

to plant a tree. There is an oak — (oh! how I love that tree) — which has been

to plant a tree. There is an oak — (oh! how I love that tree) — which has been

to plant a tree. There is an oak — (oh! how I love that tree) — which has been

70

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

thri-ving for a hun-dred years; _____ each day I send my__ bless - ing through the spheres to the

thri-ving for a hun-dred years; _____ each day I send my__ bless - ing through the spheres to the

thri-ving for a hun-dred years; _____ each day I send my__ bless - ing through the spheres to the

74

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

gva

One who gave it to me. _____ of ³ grow - ing

One who gave it* to me. _____ of ³ grow - ing

One who gave it* to me. _____ of ³ grow - ing

Fl. ⁷⁸

S 1 ⁷⁸ beau - ty, sing - ing birds, and — shade. — Wouldst thou win lau - rels — that

S 2 beau - ty, sing - ing birds, and — shade. — Wouldst thou win lau - rels — that

A beau - ty, sing - ing birds, and — shade. — Wouldst thou win lau - rels — that

Pno. ⁷⁸

Fl. ⁸²

S 1 ⁸² — shall ne - ver fade? Go plant a tree. God, what a joy! — *f* *cresc.*

S 2 — shall ne - ver fade? Go plant a tree. God, what a joy! — God, *f* *cresc.*

A — shall ne - ver fade? Go plant a tree. God, what a joy! — God, *f* *cresc.*

Pno. ⁸²

87

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

ff

ff

ff

ff

What a joy! God, what a joy!

what a joy! God, what a joy!

what a joy! God, what a joy!

Slower, with appreciation (♩ = 102)

92

Fl.

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

mp

mp

mp

mp

God, God

God, what a joy! God, what a joy!

God, what a joy! God, what a joy!

Fl. ⁹⁶

S 1 ⁹⁶
God, what a joy to plant a tree.

S 2 ⁹⁶
God, what a joy to plant a tree.

A ⁹⁶
God, what a joy to plant a tree.

Pno. ⁹⁶
mp

The musical score is for a piece in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features five staves: Flute (Fl.), Soprano 1 (S 1), Soprano 2 (S 2), Alto (A), and Piano (Pno.). The lyrics are: "God, what a joy to plant a tree." The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano). A large watermark "Perusal Only" is overlaid on the score.